

## MISCELLANY

Items for the News column must be furnished by the twentieth of the preceding month. Under this department are grouped: News; Medical Economics; Correspondence; Department of Public Health; California Board of Medical Examiners; and Twenty-five Years Ago. For Book Reviews, see index on the front cover, under Miscellany.

### NEWS

**Visiting Appointment to Union Medical College, Peiping.**—Dr. Emile Holman, professor of surgery in the Stanford University School of Medicine, San Francisco, has been granted leave of absence during the autumn quarter to serve as visiting professor of surgery in Peiping Union Medical College, Peiping, China. During August, Doctor Holman will visit Japan and give lectures and clinics at the Severance Union Medical College, Seoul, Korea.

**The Western Journal of Surgery and Surgical Specialties.**—The editorial board takes pleasure in announcing the early publication of *The Western Journal of Surgery* to replace *The Medical Sentinel* in the interest of the regional problems in the fields of surgery in all its branches—gynecology, obstetrics, and all matters pertaining thereto. This move is in response to an enthusiastic demand, and is the result of years of careful observation of regional conditions. The journal will be devoted to the interests of the individual physician in the promulgation of scientific learning and mutual confidence.

Subscribers to *The Medical Sentinel* will receive the *Western Journal of Surgery* beginning with its first issue.

**Service Bureau.**—Mr. Allen J. McCarthy, formerly business manager and chief of administrative service in several U. S. Army, U. S. Public Health Service, and U. S. Veterans' Bureau hospitals in various parts of the country for the past twelve years and late superintendent of the Alameda Sanatorium, Alameda, has recently opened offices in the Wakefield Building, Oakland, under the title of "The Allen Hospital Bureau." This bureau furnishes professional, technical and administrative personnel to hospitals, clinics, physicians, and dentists, together with a consulting service in hospital administration.

### MUCH IN LITTLE \*

Poor results make poor collections.

Losses of inexperienced operators in the stock market are more easily recouped than the losses of inexperienced operators in the abdomen.

The breaking up of adhesions in a stiff joint, under a general anesthetic, is a good guarantee of some permanent disability.

Hemorrhoids are often the price one pays for his ignorance of the art of defecation. Alternate pressure and relaxation allows proper anal dilatation.

\* Members of the California, Nevada, and Utah Medical Associations are invited to contribute to this column of aphorisms, which will appear from time to time in California and Western Medicine, as sufficient copy accumulates.

The aphorisms in the September and October issues were contributed by John Hunt Shephard, M. D., San José.

### DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

By W. M. DICKIE, Director

**Epidemic Poliomyelitis Less Prevalent.**—The epidemic of acute anterior poliomyelitis which has prevailed during the present summer is now subsiding rapidly. Since the middle of July, when the disease reached peak in its prevalence, the number of cases reported has decreased by 47 per cent. There were but fifty-two cases reported during the week ending August 16. Since the beginning of the year a total of 880 cases of the disease have occurred in California. Of these, 785 were reported from the eight counties of southern California. The remaining ninety-five cases were reported from twenty-two other counties of the state. No cases of poliomyelitis have been reported this year from twenty-eight counties of California. Any further rise in the prevalence of the disease this year is unlooked for, and it now appears that the number of reported cases will continue to diminish each week.

Information relative to the number of deaths that may have occurred and the number of cases in which there are resultant paralyses is not available at the present time. It would appear, however, that relatively few deaths have occurred and relatively few cases of paralysis have been left in the wake of the epidemic.

**Population and Death Rates.**—The remarkable increase in the population of California as revealed in figures released by the United States Bureau of the Census is an important factor in lowering the death rates for the various causes of death. Standard mortality rates are based upon the numbers of deaths that occur in every 100,000 of the population. Estimates of population at mid-year are based upon the rate of increase during the ten years that intervene between the 1920 and 1930 census. Since the state grew from 3,426,000 in 1920 to 5,672,000 in 1930, the estimates of population during the intervening years are made much higher. Instead of having a typhoid fever death rate of 2.3 per 100,000 population, as under the old estimate of population, at mid-year, the typhoid fever death rate for 1929 was 1.7 per 100,000 population, as based upon the computed increase. With tuberculosis, instead of a mortality rate of 139 per 100,000 population, the new computations give the state a rate of 106.3 per 100,000 population for this disease. Similar figures give California added prestige in the accomplishments that have been made in the control of the various communicable diseases. The new mortality rates as based on the new estimates of population, now available, place California in the van as one of the most healthful states in the Union.

**Condemnation of Off-Grade Walnut Meats.**—During the season 1929-1930, a total of 1,594,263 pounds of off-grade walnut meats were condemned by the Bureau of Food and Drugs. These products were sent to oil mills, where they were converted into edible oil products. Inspectors of the Bureau of Food

and Drugs visited nut-cracking establishments, wholesale candy factories and wholesale bakeries, as well as cold-storage plants. The off-grade products, which consist of walnut meats that were mouldy, rancid, or infested with worms, were placed in sacks and quarantined. The removal of these faulty products from the market and their conversion into products suitable for human consumption is of benefit to the consuming public. The United States Department of Agriculture and the State Department of Agriculture cooperated with the State Department of Public Health in making this survey.

**Examination of Entering School Children.**—The annual summer round-up of children who will enter school for the first time was completed during the summer months. Nearly eight thousand children were given physical examinations under the auspices of the Bureau of Child Hygiene of the State Department of Public Health and the California Congress of Parents and Teachers. These examinations were made in thirty-eight counties of the state. Recommendations were made for the correction of physical defects that were discovered by the examining physicians. The removal of such defects is of vital importance, not only to the health and education of the individual children, but it is also of value in the conservation of school moneys, for school appropriations are based upon average daily attendance.

**Beginnings of Vital Statistics in California Counties.** During recent years there has been a larger demand for copies of birth certificates for events of births which occurred prior to July 1905, when the State Vital Statistics Act went into effect. The increase in travel to European countries has provided a stimulus which has resulted in many requests for certificates of births which occurred prior to state registration. Applicants for such certificates must, of necessity, be referred to the recorders of the counties in which they may have been born. In various counties the State Department of Public Health has gathered information pertaining to registration from each of the county recorders of the state. It has been found that marriage records have been kept most faithfully from the earliest times. Deaths have been registered in rather desultory fashion and records of births in many counties are totally incomplete. It is interesting to note that registration of marriages began in Sonoma County in 1846, four years before the state government was organized. These marriage records were made under the old Bear Flag government, which flourished in Sonoma County in the early days. Many of the counties have marriage records which date back to the early fifties. This pertains especially to the mountain counties in the old mining districts and to other counties which were organized early in the history of California.

No birth or marriage records for San Francisco are available for the period prior to April 18, 1906, as all these records were destroyed in the San Francisco conflagration of that date. A few of the San Francisco death certificates were saved from the fire, most of these being dated in the early sixties and seventies.

**Marriage Decline in 1930.**—The total number of marriages performed in California during the first six months of the present year is seventy-four short of the total number performed during the first six months of 1929. The total for the first half of the year 1929 was 24,076 and for the corresponding period of 1930 it was 24,002.

## TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO \*

### EXCERPTS FROM OUR STATE MEDICAL JOURNAL

Vol. III, No. 10, October 1905

*From some editorial notes:*

**McCormack on Organization.**—During the present month of October, Dr. J. N. McCormack of Bowling Green, Kentucky, is to visit California and address the physicians of our state on the subject of organization and what it means to the community and to the physician. . . .

. . . Now it remains for us to take the next step—to perfect that organization and to make it more and more useful, not alone to the profession itself, but to the laymen whom we serve. It is largely to help us take this step that Doctor McCormack is coming to visit us. . . .

**New Orleans Death Rate.**—The *New Orleans Medical and Surgical Journal* for September presents some very interesting figures on the relative number of cases and deaths from yellow fever during the present and previous epidemics. . . .

**Use the Office.**—The secretary desires to call the attention of members to the fact that the office of the society, in the Y. M. C. A. building, San Francisco, could possibly be of service more often than it is, if they would but use it as a sort of "clearing house." For instance, it very frequently happens that nurses desiring hospital appointments, or general work, apply to the secretary; we also have noted two or three stenographers who are perfectly competent to take medical dictation. Physicians desiring to go away for a time and who have no one at hand to take care of their work, could often be placed in communication with men who would be glad of the change and who would like the opportunity of thus substituting for the absentee. . . .

**"Patent" and Secret Proprietary Medicines.**—The CALIFORNIA STATE JOURNAL OF MEDICINE wishes to congratulate the *Journal of the American Medical Association* on this frank expression regarding certain undesirable advertisements which appear in its pages; this attitude disarms criticism. It is only to be regretted that such a statement as this was not made a year ago, in which case we would have been spared the necessity of making unpleasantly critical remarks. We are particularly glad to note the public announcement that the objectionable advertisements will be dropped from the journal's pages as the contracts expire. . . .

*From the "President's Address at the Third Annual Meeting of the Pacific Association of Railway Surgeons" by N. H. Morrison, M.D., Los Angeles.*

. . . There are two or three important points to which I desire to call your attention. One is "Drinking Water." All water at division points, where men are working, should be carefully examined by a bacteriologist, and if found impregnated with germs should be sterilized before using for drinking purposes. . . .

*From an article on "Early Operation of Gall-Stone Disease" by Emmet Rixford, M.D., San Francisco.*

The surgical treatment of gall-stone disease is a subject so extensive and one whose literature is so vast that it is a sheer impossibility to make an adequate presentation of it in a single paper. . . .

\* This column strives to mirror the work and aims of colleagues who bore the brunt of state society work some twenty-five years ago. It is hoped that such presentation will be of interest to both old and recent members.